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ABSTRACT

This report describes The Children's Partnership, which investigates what children need most from their communities and how to provide it. The report presents a snapshot of children in America in 1900 and 2000, noting policy milestones that changed America and its families and discussing progress which has benefited most American children but has also bypassed millions of others. Today's challenges include: strengthening the economic well-being of families; reinforcing positive values; ensuring that children have the basics to succeed; strengthening citizen involvement; and dealing with the epidemic of violence. Programs at the Partnership help bring tangible benefits to children and families while creating momentum for solving problems in the future. The Partnership involves national advisors; public, private, and nonprofit collaboration; offices on both the east and west coast; and experienced founders. Partnership goals include: developing safe, high quality online media to benefit families and children; bringing the benefits of information technology to underserved youth; equipping parents as guides and advocates for children in the digital age; providing health insurance for all children; broadening the constituency advocating for healthy children; providing a research base that guides effective new child advocacy strategies; taking creative ideas to leaders for children; and connecting more Americans to this cause. (Contains 66 references.) (SM)

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america's children in the 21st century

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The Children's Partnership's

mission is to put the unique needs

of children front and center

in a changing economy,

culture, and policy world.

We work to ensure all children

especially the disadvantaged—

have access to the resources they need,

and we work to involve more

Americans in the cause for kids.

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"The Children's Partnership has served as a kind of Research and Development arm to the children's movement. Their sophisticated understanding of trends and solid grounding in children's needs have turned innovative ideas into resources to help kids today."

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Dear Friend:

In September of 1993, we started with an idea.

We envisioned a child advocacy organization that would provide an effective voice for children in a changing world, fight to see that underserved children have the services and opportunities they need from the digital economy and health care system, and expand the reach of child advocacy to new issues and audiences.

In 1993, America was already transforming itself in breathtaking ways with a new information-based and global economy, changing demographics, and shifts in politics, policies and popular culture.

In response, corporate America was investing millions of dollars in record levels for research and development to see what these changes would mean and what new products and business models would be needed to ensure a strong and profitable future.

We believed that the children's field needed the same kind of thinking—an open-minded but hard-nosed look ahead to see what children needed most from their communities and how best to get it to them.

America's Children at the 21st Century: Putting Ideas to Work reports on how that idea became the core of our work at The Children's Partnership, what difference our work has made, and where we are headed in the future.

We begin the report with a snapshot of children in America in 1900 and 2000, including the policy milestones that changed America and its families. While we might take universal public education and child labor laws for granted today, they are the legacy of advocates and the public acting together for kids.

At The Children's Partnership, we are striving to build upon this tradition and carry it into the 21st century. We hope you find this report useful as we look ahead to new ways to better the lives of America's children.

To all of those who have helped us transform our ideas into action, we thank you.

Wendy Lazarus & Laurie Lipper
Founding Directors

america's children then & now: a snapshot

A look at how children fared over the past century reveals patterns that inform our responses to new challenges as we move forward into the 21st century.

Extraordinary advances have been made: killer childhood diseases like polio and whooping cough have been virtually wiped out, dramatically higher percentages of children now complete high school, and more parents live to see their children and grandchildren grow up.

Yet, repeatedly, the progress that benefited the majority of American children has also bypassed millions of others, requiring that tailored strategies be focused on the special needs of the children and families left behind.

	CHILDREN OF 1900	CHILDREN OF 2000
AVERAGE LIFE EXPECTANCY	47 years[1]	77 years[2]
NUMBER OF CHILDREN	34 million[3]	79 million[4]
CHILDREN AS A % OF U.S. POPULATION	44%[5]	29%[6]
FORMAL EDUCATION FOR CHILDREN	Children's formal education typically ended at age 14 when they completed grammar school.[7]	All states require children to remain in school until at least the age of 16.[8]
SCHOOL ENROLLMENT	78% of school-aged children were enrolled in school.[9]	98% of school-aged children are enrolled in school.[10]
HIGH SCHOOL COMPLETION	6% of young people completed high school.[11]	86% of young people complete high school—more than a 1300% increase over the century.[12]
EDUCATION BEYOND HIGH SCHOOL	19 in 1,000 young adults received a bachelor's or first professional degree.[13]	485 in 1,000 young adults receive bachelor's and associate's degrees.[14]
HOUSEHOLD COMPOSITION	A typical household had 4.8 members.[15]	A typical household has 2.6 members.[16]
MOTHERS IN THE LABOR FORCE	6% of all married women were in the paid labor force.[17]	65% of mothers with children are in the workforce.[18]
YOUNG PEOPLE AT WORK	One in six (approximately 15%) children between the ages of 10 and 15 was employed—60% of them as agricultural workers.[19]	45% of 16–19 year olds are employed—4% of them as agricultural workers[20]; a majority of children under age 18 do volunteer work.[21]
INFANT DEATHS	There were 96 infant deaths per 1,000 live births.[22]	There are 7 infant deaths per 1,000 live births—a thirteenfold improvement over the century.[23]
OWNERSHIP OF A TELEPHONE AT HOME	5% of American homes had a telephone.[24]	94% of American homes have a telephone.[25]
HOME OWNERSHIP OF A COMPUTER	N/A	68% of American homes with children have a computer.[26]

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challenges for the 21st century

While progress has been remarkable, some challenges persist and new ones emerge as we enter the 21st century.

For example, even with tremendous gains in medicine and public health, more than 11 million children still have no health insurance, the surest ticket to proper health care.

While more children than ever attend school, computers and the Internet are transforming learning; yet millions of low-income children don't have access to the educational and economic opportunities of digital technology. And, nearly a quarter of children under age six live in poverty.[27]

CHALLENGE	WHERE WE STAND TODAY
TO STRENGTHEN THE ECONOMIC WELL-BEING OF FAMILIES	Children have replaced the elderly as the poorest age group, with poverty rates for children under age 6 twice as high as for adults and the elderly.[28]
	Children who are poor are three times more likely to die in infancy, four times more likely to become pregnant as teenagers, and are more likely to drop out of school than are their more affluent counterparts.[29]
	Full-time work at a minimum wage job does not lift a parent with two children out of poverty.[30]
TO REINFORCE POSITIVE VALUES IN A CHANGING CULTURE	Nearly one in six Americans move every year, more than any other nation.[31]
	Children spend an average of 4.4 hours each day in front of media screens (using television, videotapes, computers and video games).[32]
	Children influence purchasing power of an estimated $241 billion in spending each year, making them a prime marketing target.[33]
	12% of 8th graders, 22% of 10th graders and 26% of 12th graders use illicit drugs.[34]
TO ASSURE CHILDREN THE BASICS TO SUCCEED	39% of fourth grade students do not read or write at grade level.[35]
	50% of children never complete a single year of college.[36]
	3,000 children are added to the ranks of the uninsured each day.[37]
	Five million school-age children are home alone after school each day.[38]
	Roughly 50% of children in our nation's poorest schools are still not using information technology.[39]
TO STRENGTHEN CITIZEN INVOLVEMENT & LEADERSHIP	40% of parents do not feel good about their children's future.[40]
	Parents with non-adult children are less likely to vote than other members of the electorate.[41]
	The percentage of voters more likely to be sympathetic to children's issues (adults in the child-rearing ages) is expected to decline over the next decade.[42]
TO DEAL WITH THE EPIDEMIC OF VIOLENCE	Children between the ages of 12 and 17 are nearly three times more likely than adults to be victims of violent crimes.[43]
	The firearm injury epidemic is ten times larger than the polio epidemic was in the first half of this century.[44]
	Children witness more than 100,000 acts of violence on TV by the time they complete elementary school and 200,000 acts of violence by the time they graduate from high school.[45]
	Approximately five children die each day as a result of abuse or neglect.[46]

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putting ideas to work: building the children's partnership

The Children's Partnership's programs are designed to bring tangible benefits to children and families today, while creating momentum for solving problems that families will face tomorrow. We endeavor to provide information and develop tools that will be useful to a wide range of leaders and advocates for children.

We do this by using a "research and development" approach in our work, looking several years ahead not only at children's issues, but also at changing cultural, economic and political trends. We analyze what forces will impact kids and families, and look for the opportunities to advance their interests.

We then undertake independent research and fashion recommendations and solutions. We craft policies, public education campaigns, strategic partnerships, and demonstration programs that benefit children and that engage leaders, the public and others.

This focus on the future helps us shape the debate around new issues as well as seek out social pioneers—those leaders who are forging new approaches—and promote their work to a wider audience.

At The Children's Partnership, we strive to combine the best of social entrepreneurship and ground it in our more than 45 years of experience in child advocacy and a solid track record of delivering results that work for families.

the children's partnership's programs

AMERICAN FAMILIES IN THE DIGITAL AGE

✸

AMERICA'S CHILDREN AND THE CHANGING HEALTH MARKETPLACE

✸

NEXT GENERATION STRATEGIES

NATIONAL ADVISORS

To help us develop a strategic and sound program, we recruited a diverse "braintrust" of leaders from the media, business, advocacy, research, political and policy arenas (see inside cover). They continue to help guide our work.

PARTNERSHIPS

From the start, we aimed to leverage our work through strategic alliances with public, private and nonprofit partners, and to avoid duplicating work already done by effective organizations. In six years, we have developed many productive and complementary partnerships, ranging from The National PTA and National Urban League to AT&T, America Online and the California Small Business Association.

ORGANIZATION AND STAFF

The Children's Partnership is committed to a structure that is lean, flexible, fiscally sound and well-managed. We have two offices (in Santa Monica, CA and Washington, DC) and eight full-time employees. We are grateful that we have been able to find and attract a highly talented, creative, versatile and diverse staff that has contributed so much to the organization and its programs.

THE FOUNDERS

Wendy Lazarus and Laurie Lipper are the Founders and Directors of The Children's Partnership. They bring extensive experience in policy, advocacy, marketing and communications at the community, state and national levels. Prior to establishing The Children's Partnership, they served as founding Vice Presidents of Children Now, a California-based child advocacy organization, and their innovative approaches to children's advocacy have been adopted by other organizations around the country. Both serve frequently as consultants on children's issues.

Ms. Lazarus is a widely respected children's policy expert, having worked on the front lines of advocacy in Washington, DC and four states as a lobbyist, strategist, and policy analyst on a wide range of children's issues, including health, childcare, family income, and technology access.

Ms. Lipper is a nationally respected expert and strategist on communications and social issues with a particular emphasis on children and the new media. Her special expertise is using a broad range of media tools, such as public opinion research and media relations, to market and advocate for children's issues.

"I always look to see what
The Children's Partnership is doing.
Their work says a lot about what issues
are beginning to appear on the horizon
and what we can do to effectively
prepare for them today."

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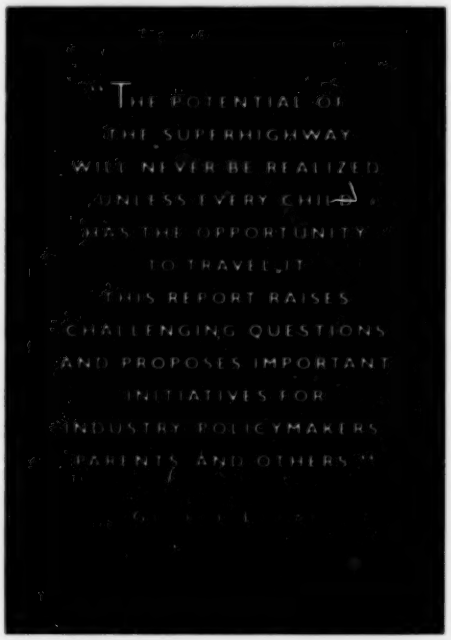
program: american families in the digital age

A multiyear initiative to ensure quality digital media is accessible to all young people.

- 2.1 billion e-mail messages are sent daily in the U.S.[7]
- 55% of children aged 11 and over use the Internet for school work.[8]
- 89% of schools and 51% of instructional rooms are connected to the Internet.[9]



Digital media are unquestionably changing the way young people learn, play, communicate, consume and prepare for the future. Yet, the unique social, safety, educational, cognitive and developmental needs of children are not front and center in its development. The history of media (particularly that of television) shows us that without the forceful intervention of parents, educators and other advocates, the needs of children will not be adequately met.

When The Children's Partnership (TCP) began this program in 1994, data about the number of children online were simply not available. Today, over one in four children—18.6 million in the U.S.—are online.[10]

PUTTING IDEAS TO WORK

GOAL #1: Developing safe, high-quality online media beneficial to children & families

The Children's Partnership launched this program in September 1994 with the release of *America's Children and The Information Superhighway* (updated in 1996, 1998 and 1999), the first-ever report on how the digital age affects children and how best to advance their interests. This groundbreaking report served to guide hundreds of nonprofits as well as policy and corporate decision-makers across the nation.

GOAL #2: Bringing the benefits of information technology to underserved youth

- An estimated 60% of jobs require skills using technology.[11]
- People who use computers on the job earn 43% more than other workers.[12]
- Households with incomes of $75,000 and higher are more than twenty times as likely to have access to the Internet as those at the lowest income levels.[13]

As more employment and educational information, goods, services and communications are available online, those without access become increasingly limited in opportunity. TCP seeks to address this equity issue through:

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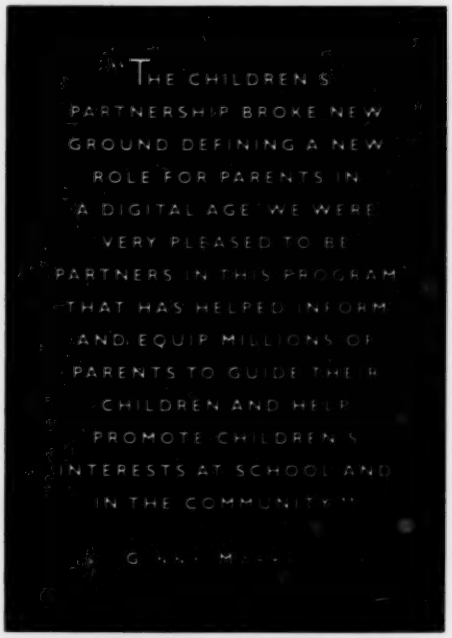
RESEARCH: *California Youth: Their Access to Computers & Technological Readiness* (July 1997) and a new *Strategic Audit on Online Content for Low-Income Users* (upcoming, February 2000) set out baselines for state and national advocacy.

PUBLIC POLICY: The Children's Partnership has begun to forge a public policy agenda for achieving equitable access for all young people. We are working in select states to establish state-based technology policies that benefit young people.



DEMONSTRATION & PARTNERSHIPS: Computers In Our Future (CIOF) is a $7.3 million partnership to develop eleven community technology centers in low-income neighborhoods across California. These centers help young people ages 14 to 23 gain the job skills they need in a digital economy. The project involves community organizations working with The California Wellness Foundation, TCP, Compu-Mentor, Community Partners, and Claremont Graduate University as well as corporate partners.

RESULTS: Computers In Our Future has served 5,900 young people directly (well on its way to a goal of 9,000), is helping build more powerful community institutions, is strengthening the local economy, and is regarded as a national model for delivering technology and its benefits to low-income communities.*

GOAL #3: Equipping parents and others as guides and advocates for children in the digital age

Parents and other caregivers are not only on the front lines with their own kids, they can also influence public policy and the market. TCP works to inform and involve them through:

CONSUMER GUIDES: Based on extensive research, TCP wrote the award-winning *The Parents' Guide to the Information Superhighway: Rules and Tools for Families Online* in conjunction with the National PTA and the National Urban League. The Children's Partnership continues to research parents' views, most recently through focus groups involving parents of different incomes and races.

RESULTS: Nearly 500,000 copies of *The Parents' Guide* have been distributed. It has been published in four languages and five unique versions, and is available online. Our research helped the U.S. Department of Education, the American Library Association, MSNBC, Lutheran Ministries and others develop their materials for parents. Companies such as AT&T, America Online and Mattel have helped distribute the Guide, while others have used it for parent, teacher, and librarian advocacy.

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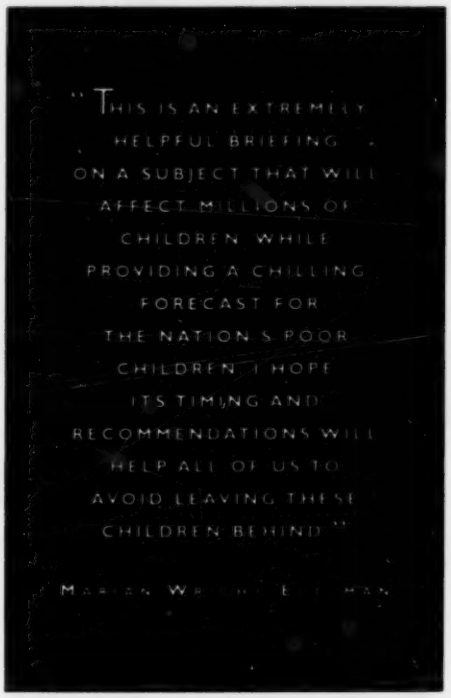
ONLINE INFORMATION: TCP's award-winning Web site (www.childrenspartnership.org), which includes a Parents' Online Resource Center, is made up of a rich array of practical information that parents, teachers, librarians and community technology staff can use. Contents include activities for getting started online, a pre-packaged Internet training workshop for parents, and other useful sites for parents in Spanish as well as in English.

RESULTS: More than 500 school and library networks and individual nonprofit organizations link to the site, while others such as Bell Atlantic, Radio Shack and GetNetWise recommend our site to their users and customers.

DEMONSTRATION PROGRAMS: We are helping four community-based organizations build Parent Involvement in Technology programs to learn about parents' needs and how best to serve low-income parents.

RESULTS: In addition to helping build model parent involvement programs, TCP helps showcase promising projects operating in housing facilities, libraries, schools and community centers that can be replicated by others.



EDUCATING LEADERS AND THE PUBLIC: The Children's Partnership spearheaded select gatherings with industry, educators, advocates, and others to address safety, content, and digital divide issues. In addition, through consistent media coverage of the impact of technology on children and families, TCP has influenced private and public sector leaders to consider the needs of parents and has helped provide information and tools directly to parents.

RESULTS: The Children's Partnership helped convene leaders in several venues including the Washington Annenberg Program (1995) and a series of White House/Department of Commerce National Summits on Children and the Internet (1997–98). We have also joined public interest/industry coalition efforts aimed at educating parents such as a national teach-in program, America Links Up (1998), and GetNetWise, a Web site for parents (1999).

TCP has been featured regularly in the media including CNN, *Newsweek*, National Public Radio, *Washington Post*, *Fortune*, *Time Online*, *The New York Cybertimes*, *Readers' Digest*, *Parents Magazine*, *Better Homes and Gardens*, *PBS Family Magazine*, *USA Today* and many more television, radio, newspaper and online outlets.

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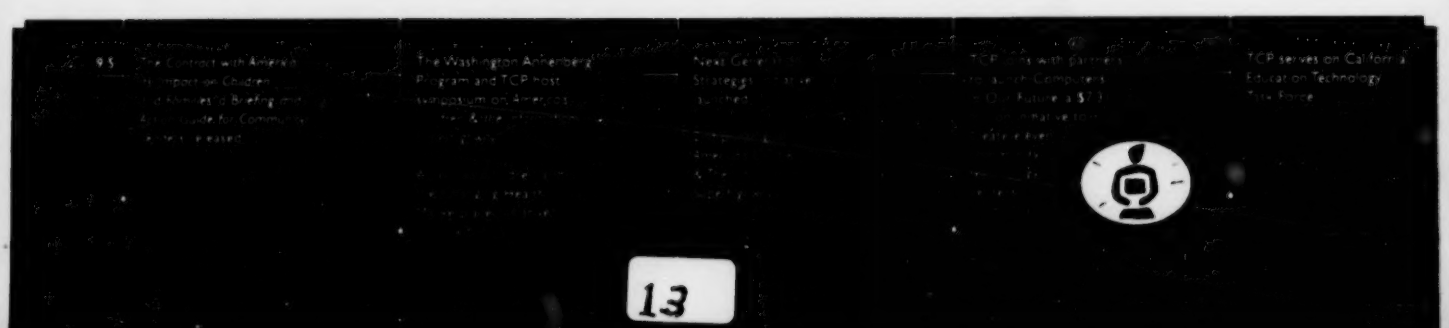
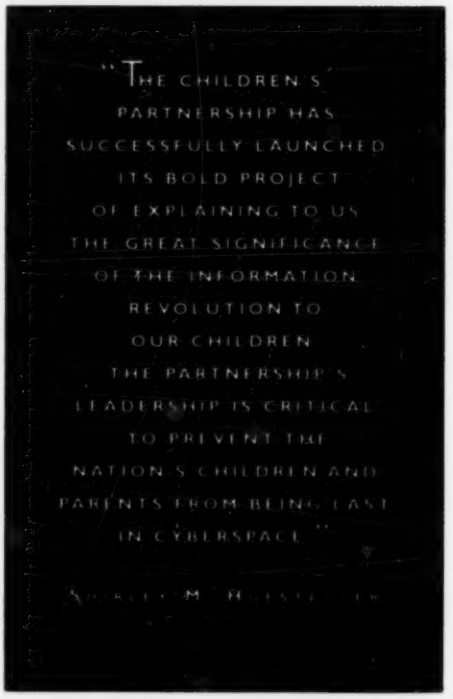


LOOKING AHEAD

There is an historic opportunity to shape the emerging digital media in ways that will benefit children, families, and society for decades to come.

Bridging the Digital Divide: Increased Access

In response to the widening gap between young people who have access to digital resources and those who do not, it is increasingly important to augment access in schools and libraries by supporting it in trusted community-based organizations. Whether in churches, Boys and Girls Clubs, after-school centers or Head Start programs, these technology access centers will assure that all children have access to online resources for homework, job searches, college seeking, and other opportunities.



TCP will advocate for a nation-wide network of community technology access centers, promote policy proposals for expanding community technology in several states and nationally, and forge partnerships in the public and private sectors to get the job done.

Involving Parents and Others as Advocates for Children

Parents, educators and leaders for children will be among kids' most effective advocates as crucial decisions about the digital media are made.

TCP will continue to research what parents want for children in the new digital age, share these ideas with a wide public, and make these views heard as decisions are made in corporate board-rooms and public policy forums. We will also reach out to enlist powerful new allies including child advocates, business leaders, and educators behind the "children's agenda in the digital age."

Research and Development

Keeping the interests of children and families out front is essential as the digital media environment quickly evolves. Just as others will monitor these developments with an eye toward how e-commerce, e-government, or the health, travel or banking industries can benefit, it will be essential to guide the deployment of these resources in ways that are best for children.

TCP will continue its research and monitoring to flag the new opportunities or possible pitfalls. Our research will concentrate on next-generation issues, such as assuring content that is not only educationally enriching but also geared to the literacy levels and language needs of the young people most likely to be left behind.

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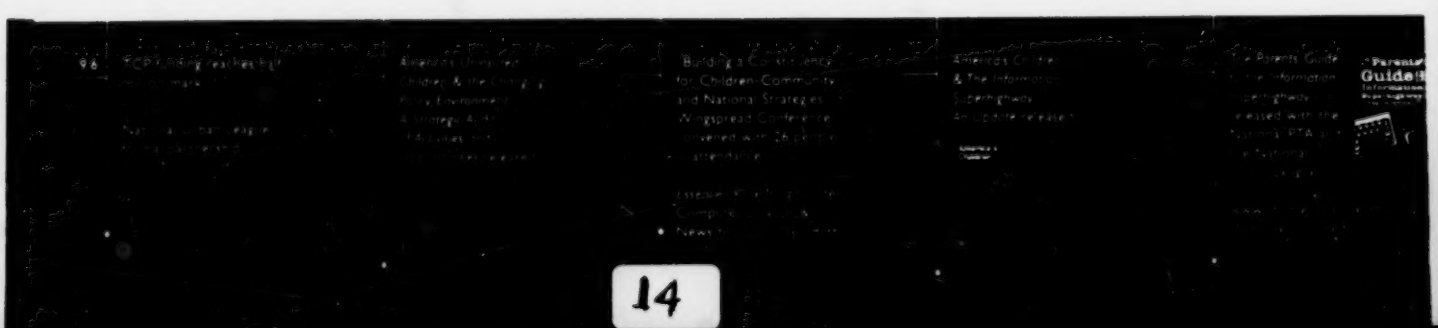
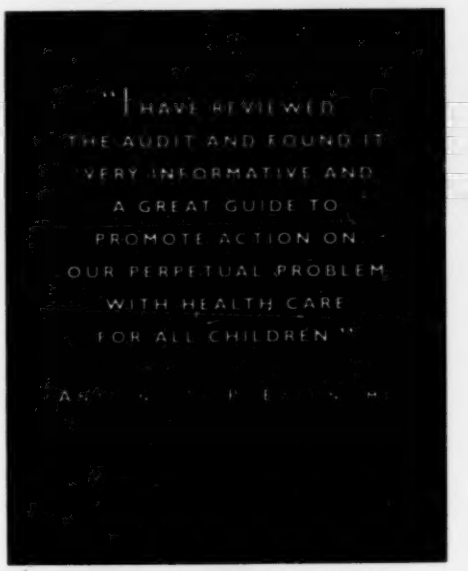


program: america's children and the changing health marketplace

A multiyear initiative to monitor changes in health policy and practice, and to identify and advocate for ways to improve health insurance coverage of and service for children.

- Over 11 million children go without health insurance, the ticket to basic health care; 30% of Hispanic children and almost 20% of African-American children are uninsured.[1]
- 70% of Americans added to the ranks of the uninsured are children.[2]
- 85% of uninsured children in the United States have parents who work.[3]



Health insurance has been proven to be a critically important factor in ensuring that children have the health care they need. Without insurance, children are more likely to suffer from untreated health problems, miss more school, have trouble learning in school, and lose out on certain childhood joys like participating in school sports.[4]

With over one in seven children uninsured, children are one of the most vulnerable groups of Americans.[5] Profound changes, such as the shift to managed care, are transforming the way health care is delivered to and used by children and parents, potentially leaving even more children vulnerable.

PUTTING IDEAS TO WORK

GOAL #1: Reaching the 100% mark: health insurance for all children

We launched our health initiative in 1995 with research and the subsequent publication of *America's Uninsured Children and the Changing Policy Environment: A Strategic Audit of Activities and Opportunities* (February 1996). Building on our extensive in-house experience in child health policy and with input from leading experts, TCP provided a roadmap for actions that public and private sectors could take to reach children who lacked health insurance.

RESULTS: The report and its recommendations served as a catalyst for leaders pursuing health coverage strategies, nationally and in states, and as a research base for The Children's Partnership's program. The findings and recommendations were widely reported in publications including the *American Academy of Pediatrics News*, *State Health News*, and *Medicine and Health*.

RESEARCH & ANALYSIS: In September 1998, patterned after our national 1996 Strategic Audit, we issued *Reaching 100% of California's Children with Affordable Health Insurance: A Strategic Audit of Activities and Opportunities*, which provided a blueprint for state-based action.

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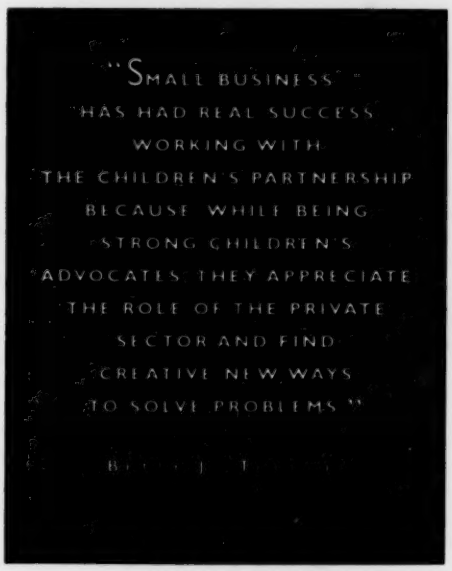
DEMONSTRATION AND PARTNERSHIPS:
Working in the most populous state in the nation with the largest number of uninsured children, we joined forces with the Children's Defense Fund and Children Now to mount the 100% Campaign. This multi-year effort aims to secure health coverage for 100% of the state's children through partnerships with the private sector, policymakers and community groups.

RESULTS: Many of our recommendations became reality in 1999 as the State Legislature and California's governor agreed on a budget that expanded health insurance to approximately 130,000 additional children and 250,000 additional parents, and streamlined the enrollment process for tens of thousands more.



GOAL #2: Broadening the constituency that advocates for healthy children

LEADERSHIP NETWORK:
We developed a special health series in our newsletter, *Next Generation Reports* (*NGR*; see page 16). The newsletter, with a distribution network of roughly 5,000 leaders, provides practical health information and valuable models and tools. Topics include: insuring kids through the child support collections system, small business strategies to provide affordable insurance, and working with the media to spotlight the problems of uninsured children.

We have partnered with several organizations to distribute *NGR* and market viable health programs to decisionmakers, including the National Association of Children's Hospitals and Related Institutions, National Conference of State Legislators, and Emergency Medical Services for Children.

RESULTS: Policymakers and their staff have used these ideas to bring about improvements for kids. In just one example, working with TCP staff, one state legislator in Maine argued that a tobacco tax increase should be used for children's health coverage. In the end, although the tobacco tax was used for other purposes, the governor and legislators agreed to allocate funds from another source to children's health.

GOAL #3: New solutions

NEW APPROACHES FOR FULL ENROLLMENT: With roughly 6.5 million uninsured children across the country eligible for health care but not enrolled, TCP is working to devise effective public policies and share best practices for full enrollment in health insurance programs.[46]

RESULTS: In California and nationally, we have proposed a dramatically accelerated process called Express Lane Eligibility that boosts children's enrollment by eliminating time-consuming paperwork.

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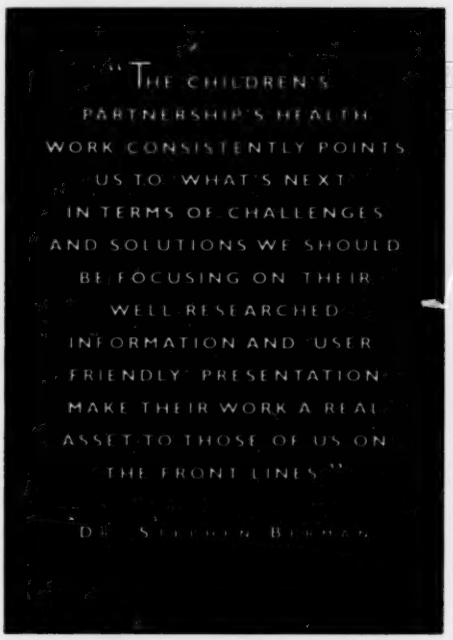
NEW ALLIANCES & STRATEGIES: Recognizing the unique role of small businesses, we are working to find new ways they can insure and help enroll the dependent children of their employees.

RESULTS: We are partnering with the California Small Business Association to survey small business owners and their employees about what it would take to "induce" them to offer dependent health coverage.

LOOKING AHEAD

The elements critical for success in reaching kids with basic health care—solid public policy, adequate resources, and leadership at the federal, state and community levels—are more readily available today than ever before. At The Children's Partnership, our top priority is to make sure that these unprecedented assets result in getting health care for America's children.



Assuring Success

Besides sustained effort and ingenuity from program administrators, elected officials and advocates alike, success will also depend on solving certain problems whose solutions have eluded our field for a long time. These include finding more effective ways to get the word out to working poor families about the availability of and enrollment procedures for health care for their kids, reducing the stigma too often associated with health programs for the poor, and cutting the red tape that deters many families. TCP will continue to push for innovative solutions like Express Lane Eligibility that address these problems.

Public/Private Strategies to Complete the Job

Even if every child eligible for publicly funded insurance programs were enrolled, nearly three million children with family incomes too high to qualify would remain uninsured but unable to afford the cost of private health insurance.* TCP will work with employers and health plan administrators to develop affordable strategies for getting these children covered.

Research and Development

Our research will continue to "future cast" three to five years out and develop ideas and proposals for new ways to make sure each child, and his or her family, has proper and secure health coverage—now and in the future.

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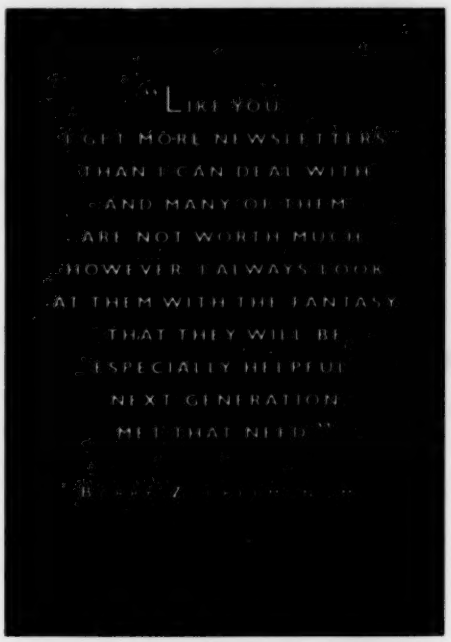
program: next generation strategies

An ongoing research and organizing project to provide leaders with information and tools about effective children's policy strategies and ways to engage more Americans on behalf of children.

We launched this program area in 1995, followed by an invitational conference in February 1996 when The Children's Partnership joined the Coalition of Community Foundations for Youth and the Johnson Foundation to convene national leaders from groups that advocate for children, families, communities and youth. The conference included briefings by Dr. Theda Skocpol on the history of successful social movements in America, Dr. Raphael Sonenshein on the elements of social movements, John Deardourff on child advocacy and state legislatures, Celinda Lake on public opinion and children's issues, and Elizabeth Schrayer on grassroots organizing for children's issues.



While most of the participants had never met and had very different experiences, there was agreement on the need to find and build a stronger, broader base of public understanding and support for children's issues. Many questions were raised and discussed about how to accomplish this—especially while protecting the diverse interests of all children. It also became clear that leaders needed concise and timely information about cutting-edge strategies to help them steer in a rapidly changing policy environment.

PUTTING IDEAS TO WORK

GOAL #1: Providing a research base that guides effective new child advocacy strategies

The Children's Partnership undertook a research program designed to bridge the gap between theory and practice to provide leaders with recommendations on how to move forward with practical ideas. Our research includes publishing monographs by provocative thinkers, probing the relationship between sectors such as community organizers and child advocates, and looking at widening the base of activists for children.

MONOGRAPH SERIES

- *10 Elements for Developing a Social Movement*, by Dr. Raphael Sonenshein and TCP.
  An exploration of what's needed to create a broad-based social movement for children (June 1995).
- *Building a Constituency for Children: Community and National Strategies.*
  A summary and highlights of the Wingspread meeting (February 1996).
- *Lessons From History: Building a Movement for America's Children*, by Theda Skocpol.
  An examination of major social policy milestones in the U.S. and the political strategies behind them (January 1997).

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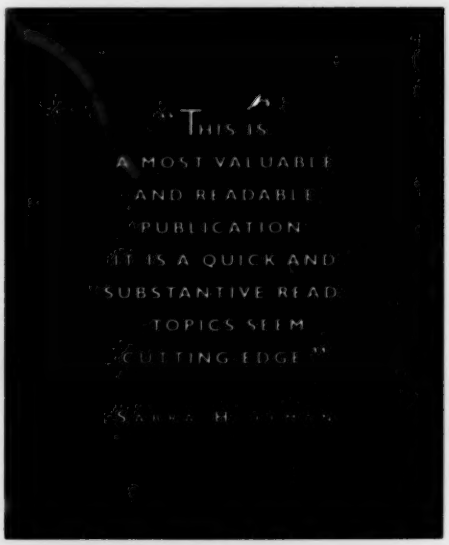
- *Making the Successes Add Up for Kids: Community and National Strategies.*
  An Invitational Symposium featuring Lisbeth Bamberger Schorr (November 1997).
- *Exploring Constituency-Building Strategies for Children: What's Working*, by Elizabeth Schrayer.
  A survey and analysis of activities around the nation (October 1998).
- *Organizing Parents: Strategies for the Children's Community*, by Elizabeth Schrayer.
  An analysis and survey of widely differing kinds of parent organizing for children (November 1999).



GOAL #2: Taking these ideas to leaders for children

Because of the demand for this information, we have developed a short-form newsletter, *Next Generation Reports*, and a distribution network of roughly 5,000 leaders across a wide spectrum of business, philanthropy, policymaking, advocacy, entertainment, grassroots, parent and faith communities. The newsletter reports on ways to effectively advance policies and action while building a stronger public base for child and family issues. It is designed to support and fuel the work of other advocacy organizations that are moving specific agendas forward in the policy and community arenas.

In order to broaden the base of support for kids, we work to communicate with individuals who are in positions where they make key decisions regarding children, but are not necessarily experts in family and child policy. We also brief children's policy experts on subjects outside their particular issue area.

A sampling of *NGR* issues and results includes:

April 1997, How American Voters View Children's Issues
This issue reports on a poll commissioned by The Children's Partnership, Coalition for America's Children, National Association of Children's Hospitals and Related Institutions, the American Academy of Pediatrics and the National PTA.

September 1997, Building a Constituency for Children
This issue includes select examples of community-based city initiatives that are achieving effective outcomes for families, while building a stronger, broader base for children's issues.

March 1998, Technology as a Social Benefit Tool
We partnered with the Morino Institute to develop an essay exploring the importance of applying technology as a social benefit tool. This issue reports on a broad range of promising programs for kids.

March 1999, The Ballot Box and Kids: Strategies for Harnessing Public Will
This issue examines a milestone in the 1998 November elections: the successful passage of California's Proposition 10, the statewide tobacco tax initiative for early childhood programs.

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July 1999, Connecting Community Organizing with a Children's Agenda

This issue focuses on the connection between community organizing and children's advocacy. It includes an interview with the Director of Public Policy for The Center for Community Change, and resources for technical assistance and training.

RESULTS: Diverse organizations across the country have used these publications. For example, The National League of Cities, I Am Your Child Chairman Rob Reiner, the Morino Institute, and the U.S. Department of Commerce have distributed copies of *Next Generation Reports* to leaders from industry, education, government and nonprofit organizations nationwide.

GOAL #3: Connecting more Americans to the cause for children

In virtually all of TCP's work, we reach out to new partners and networks to help broaden the base of support for kids. Whether through speeches and presentations to groups such as the Business Council, or through media interviews on a variety of topics, or through formal partnerships with the American Library Association and others, we forge links to broad networks across sectors. Another way we connect more Americans to the cause for kids is to suggest ways that those who already have day-to-day relationships with children—such as parents and childcare professionals—can organize more effectively.

LOOKING AHEAD

Much has changed since 1995. Some kids' issues, such as after-school programs and quality education, have proven to have real clout with voters. And the rise of the "soccer moms" as voters has had an impact. Polling shows that children's issues ranked first among voter concerns in the presidential and congressional elections of 1996.[8] And in 1999, governors in more than 40 states included children's issues in their State of the State speeches or inaugural addresses.[9]

While this growing base of support has led to valuable gains for kids in health care and after-school programs, for example, it has not yet touched some critical areas: more children in America grow up in poverty, a higher percent of workers earn below-poverty wages, and more teens who graduate from high school cannot read well enough to pass an entry level job test.

As we look to the future, the challenge we see is to channel America's current willingness to act for kids into significant and sustainable gains.

Building the Research Base

TCP will continue to develop a research base to guide children's policy strategies in this changed political landscape. We will monitor and probe trends, look at successful efforts, and search out ways to engage new allies. And we will continue to research opportunities to strengthen the voice and power of parents in their efforts to raise America's next generation successfully.

Connecting More Americans

In response to demand, we will take our information to those in states and local communities who are requesting it. We will build this capacity through two methods: (1) offline and web publishing; and (2) a targeted outreach effort that shares our research and program findings with more leaders for kids.

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inventing the future for children

During the 20th century, we have witnessed profound advances for children. The next century offers immense opportunity to continue the progress made on behalf of America's children. While there is not always agreement on prognosis or remedy, it is helpful to hear from those "thinking ahead." To close our report, we offer our commentary about the future along with some ideas from colleagues.

JOBS

"More Americans now build computers than cars, make semiconductors than construction machinery, and work in data processing than petroleum refining... And, over the next seven years, more than one million new jobs will be created in computer-related fields alone."

LARRY IRVING**
Assistant Secretary for Communications and Information
U.S. Department of Commerce

CULTURE

"Because of the Internet and technology, children today have access to a universal classroom. They can see and feel what other cultures are like. They can have pen pals from around the world. They're more informed. I think this is important for the dissolution of ethnic, religious and cultural boundaries, stereotypes, and prejudices."

FAITH POPCORN**
Trend Analyst

ADVOCACY

"By 2020, 25 states will have the population of Florida, where one in five residents is over age 65. This will have implications for who votes and what issues matter to them. We need to address the perception on the part of many older Americans that supporting schools and other children's initiatives is primarily parents' responsibility, rather than community responsibility."

HAROLD HODGKINSON**
Institute for Educational Leadership

POLICY

"Children will continue to need special attention and customized policies since they are not simply little adults requiring smaller portions of what adults need. We must be ever-vigilant to tailor our policies to kids' unique developmental needs over the next decade as our culture pushes kids to grow up even faster."

WENDY LAZARUS
Founder and Director, The Children's Partnership

MARKETPLACE

"In our largely commercial culture, the market alone will not produce all that kids need at home, in school, and in the community. We must support parents and guide our institutions in reinforcing the values that benefit the child, simply as a child and future citizen, not only as a target market."

LAURIE LIPPER
Founder and Director, The Children's Partnership

We look forward to joining forces with our many colleagues from diverse disciplines to "invent" a future that will make us all proud of what we will jointly accomplish for children and families in the 21st century.

"The best way

to predict the future is

to invent it."

Alan Kay

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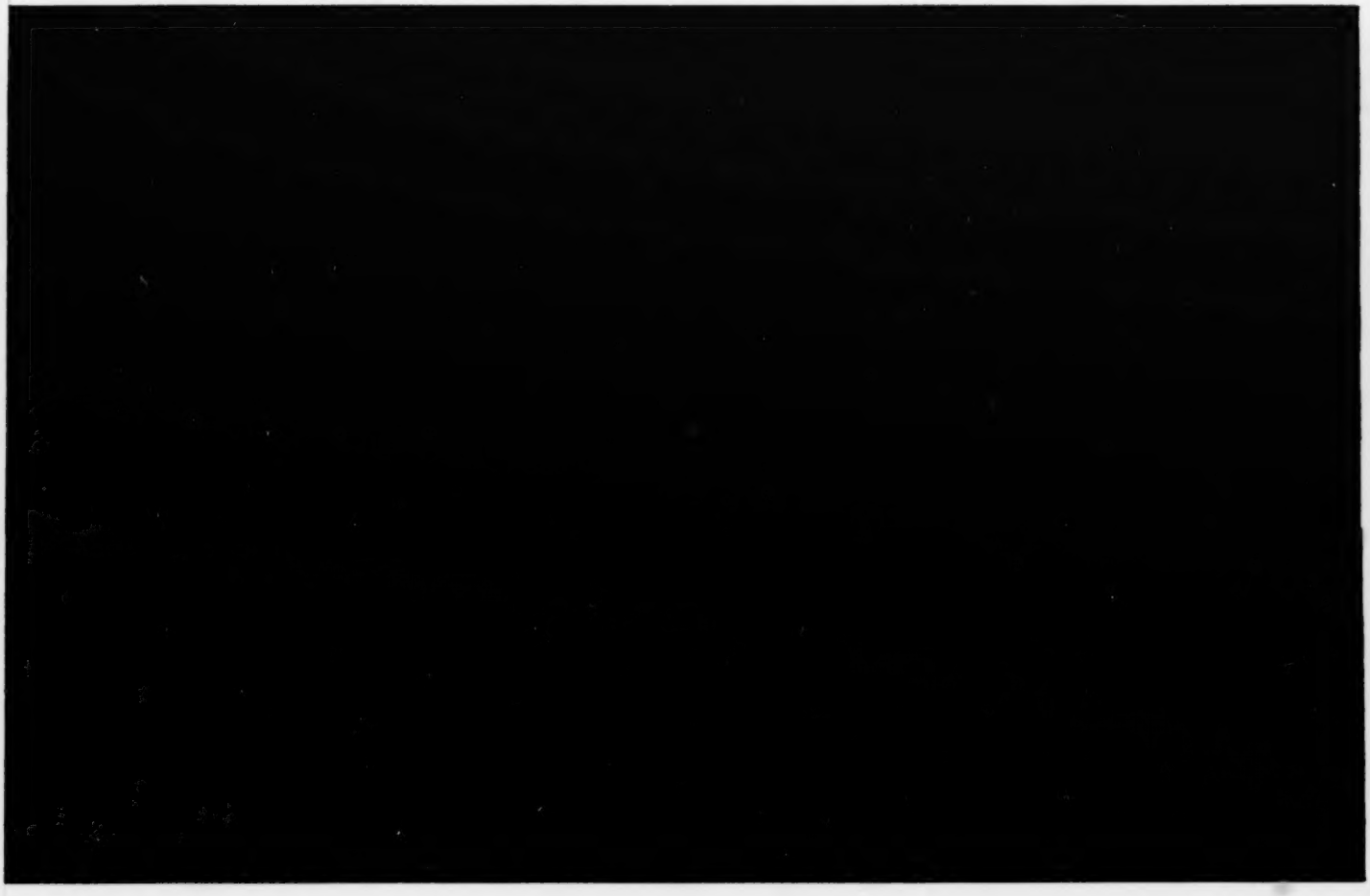

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